



500.38 Motorist Assistance

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POLICY

Law enforcement personnel operating agency vehicles will render assistance to motorists whenever possible. When unable to aid motorists, employees will request that appropriate assistance be directed to the motorist. Non-sworn personnel operating agency vehicles are encouraged to identify motorists in need of assistance and to provide the information to sworn personnel.

PROCEDURE

- A. When practical, deputies will respond to and assist citizens who request information or directions.
- B. Whenever a deputy encounters a motor vehicle creating a traffic hazard, the deputy will:
 - 1. Assist in removing the vehicle from the location.
 - 2. Use warning devices (flares, emergency lights, etc.) when necessary.
 - 3. Not use agency vehicles to push, pull or tow any vehicle unless the agency vehicle is properly equipped or is an appropriate type of vehicle to safely complete the task.
- C. Whenever a motorist requires a wrecker, the deputy will determine if the motorist has a preference in towing services. If so, and no telephone is available at the location, the deputy will request Telecommunications to call the towing service for the motorist. If the motorist has no preference, the next wrecker service on the rotation list will be called and will not be paid for by HCSO. A Property/Vehicle Storage Receipt will not be completed for towing.
- D. Deputies may transport stranded motorists to the nearest location where assistance may be obtained. Prior to doing so, the deputy shall identify the individual and advise that the individual must first agree to being frisked or he or she shall not be allowed in an agency vehicle. In addition to any of the provisions of the Stop and Frisk Law (FS 901.151), a deputy may request a person to voluntarily submit to a frisk as a condition of being transported. If the individual refuses to be identified or submit to a frisk, transportation shall be denied. Any deviation from this procedure shall require direct supervisor approval.
- E. Deputies may assist stranded motorists with minor repairs, such as changing tires, but will not become involved with lengthy or technical repairs. Deputies will take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of occupants of disabled vehicles, given factors such as location, time of day, and traffic volume.

F. Deputies responding to vehicle fires will:

1. Immediately inform the Telecommunications Center of the location, vehicle description, extent of involvement and if there are any possible occupants.
2. Immediately request response from Fire/Rescue.
3. Attempt to account for all occupants of the vehicle and render assistance to injured persons as necessary until relieved by Fire/Rescue.
4. Upon arrival of Fire/Rescue, relinquish control of the scene to the senior Fire/Rescue official and then assist in traffic or crowd control until the situation has been resolved.

G. Medical Emergencies

1. Deputies will:
 - a. Respond to roadside medical emergencies and notify the Telecommunications Center of the location, the type of medical emergency, the number of patients and the apparent condition of the sick or injured. Deputies will request that emergency medical services respond as needed.
 - b. Render assistance to the injured person(s).

H. Road Hazards

1. Deputies will identify and summon aid from or report to the proper state, county, or city agency any hazard that may contribute to traffic crashes or otherwise endanger the public. Hazards include but are not limited to:
 - a. Debris or dropped loads in the roadway
 1. A deputy may remove small debris from the roadway if the debris is small enough, safely handled, and in a location that would cause undue risk; appropriate safety clothing and equipment must be used.
 - b. Potholes, sinkholes or other roadway defects
 - c. Damaged and/or missing traffic signs as well as inoperable traffic signals
 - d. Roadway flooding
 - e. Lack of or defective roadway lighting
 - f. Vehicles parked or abandoned on or near the roadway
 - g. Deputies suspecting that hazardous material was spilled or dropped on the roadway will take steps to identify the type of hazardous material, protect and isolate the scene and notify the Telecommunications Center to have Fire/Rescue respond. The paramount concern to the deputy is to protect the public and themselves from the effects of the hazardous material.

DEFINITIONS

GENERAL ASSISTANCE – Service of a non-emergency nature provided by Office personnel, such as providing information or directions and assisting stranded or disabled motorists.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE – Service of an emergency nature provided by Office personnel for the benefit of highway users.

HIGHWAY USERS – Drivers, passengers or pedestrians who use the highway systems.

REFERENCES

State/Federal Regulations:

None

CFA:

None

Forms:

None

Other Policy/ Procedure References:

None